

Mr. Bartley began the history of his life. It had a sad shade. He had become separated from his relatives while making a fortune. He had returned from a distant country to find them scattered, dead, lost. He had not been able to find one near of kin living.

"My sister Elsie, who was Mrs. Prothero," began Mr. Bartley, and

Bob stopped him excitedly to tell him of the friendless orphan, Elsie Prothero, whom he knew.

It took only a few days to prove that old Mr. Bartley had found a near and dear relative. He felt too grateful to Bob not to see him started in business on a good way. As to Ethel—although an heiress now, she was true to the hero of her humbler days.

THE CONFESSIONS OF A WIFE

I DON'T LIKE TO BE TAGGED

Chapter C1.

Some way I run up against all of Dick's mother's prejudices and I don't think I am an unconventional woman, either. I think perhaps it is because Mrs. Waverly, Sr., always accepts as gospel any conventional tradition and Mrs. Waverly, Jr., is always asking the reason for things.

Dick and I were married with a ring. Someone asked Dick, just before the wedding, if he were going to use the double ring ceremony and he answered: "Not on your life! Why should I tag myself?"

At the time the words did not make any impression on me, but one day when I was recalling the events of my wedding day they came back to me, and I said to myself: "Why should I tag myself, either?" and immediately I took off my wedding ring, and I only wear it as I do my other rings when I think it looks well with my costume.

As a rule I do not wear rings in the morning and consequently Mother Waverly noticed my bare hand and exclaimed in accents of horror: "Madge, have you lost your wedding ring?"

"No," I answered, composedly.

"What have you done with it?" she demanded.

"At the present moment I think it is on the little ring stand on my dressing table," I answered.

"Madge, I can't understand you at all. You seem very much in love with Dick and yet the sacred and beautiful

emblem of your wedded state means nothing to you!"

"Yes, it means much to me, mother dear, but it means nothing to the world at large, and I have come to believe that this constant explaining to everyone you meet one's absolute status in society is a relic of the time when woman was a chattel and was handed from father to husband and must bear emblazoned on her person something which might tell her history and her owner. The moment a girl is engaged she tells it to everybody by means of a more or less expensive engagement ring and upon her marriage to it added the conventional gold band which says, 'Yes, I'm married.'

"But you notice that very few husbands, to whom the sacrament of marriage is presumably as sacred as to their wives, feel called upon to tag themselves in a similar manner."

"Don't you want people to know you are married?" asked mother Waverly in horrified tones.

"I resent having everybody know my personal affairs," I answered. "While I was teaching school I never went to a man on business, but among the first questions he put was: 'Are you married?'"

"I consider that a perfectly proper question, Margie," said Mrs. Waverly with conviction. "A man would treat an unmarried woman very differently from a married one."

"Why should he?" I asked petulantly. "In the first place, I did not